

that goes into assuring the safety and security of the siting, should be decided in the broad daylight of public discussion through the proper channels. In this case, people circumvented that public commission process in Nebraska, circumvented what would have been a utilities and transportation commission process, and let the Governor decide the route. Then the decision was sent to the Nebraska Supreme Court to determine whether in fact the Governor had the authority to do that. Four of those seven justices said it was unconstitutional—not the supermajority for sure, but four of them said it was unconstitutional. But nothing in that decision corrected the original problem of them circumventing the environmental and economic and security issues that a public commission is supposed to go through in this process.

I ask my colleagues, why are we in such a big hurry to make this decision on behalf of a utility commission and on behalf of the President of the United States when there are real issues of safety and security that need to be discussed?

Next week my colleagues are going to have a lot of discussion on a lot of different amendments, but I still advocate that Congress has no business deciding for a special interest where a pipeline should go without the due process of citizens who are affected by pipeline having input to the decision.

I hope my colleagues will continue to let the process play out. I hope my colleagues will care more about public process and public interest than special interest. There is a great article, which I will submit for the RECORD, in Business Week citing welding issues with the current Keystone Pipeline. That existing pipeline has had safety problems.

We in the Pacific Northwest celebrate that we are a gateway to Asia, and we celebrate the fact that a lot of people will want to use that gateway. But we are very concerned about due process for infrastructure projects. We see other countries wanting to move energy and other products through our gateway when safety, security, environmental, and public issues are not being fully addressed.

I hope my colleagues will continue to make sure due process is given and that we will continue to make sure all of these public interest and environmental issues are addressed.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

I see the leader on the floor, so I will not suggest the absence of a quorum.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### RECOGNIZING FACTORY SERVICE AGENCY

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, Louisianians are well-known for our delicious food, rich cultural traditions, and enthusiasm for football. Less well known, but just as important, is our deep appreciation for reliable air conditioning. During the muggy summer months, every Louisianian needs a reliable air conditioning contractor on speed dial. As the newly elected chairman of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, I am honored to recognize a small business from my State that provides this vital service to its customers—the Factory Service Agency—which is celebrating its 40th year of operation this year.

Based out of Metairie, LA, Factory Service Agency serves the entire New Orleans metro area. While the business encompasses a multitude of mechanical and general contracting specialties, the primary focus is on the installation, service, and maintenance of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment. This longstanding Louisiana business emphasizes its middle name—“service”—and truly provides outstanding customer service, including 24-hour emergency assistance and maintenance for airflow and ductwork problems. For four decades, Factory Service Agency has gone above and beyond to supply quality products and service to local hospitals, universities, manufacturing facilities, nursing homes, and more.

Small businesses provide the backbone for our economy, and their successes would not be possible without the direction of exceptional leaders. Mike Mitternacht, the owner of Factory Service Agency, is not only responsible for all operations of the business, but also makes representing small businesses across the State a top priority. Over the years, Mike Mitternacht has served on a variety of notable government and business organizations. In addition to his chairmanship of the statewide Louisiana Economic Development Small Business Advisory Council, he has served as the chairman of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry and as a member of the National Federation of Independent Business, Louisiana Workforce Investment Council, and the National Small Business Association, the last of which he was named the 2010 Advocate of the Year. Small businesses across the country are fortunate to have a strong proponent with such valuable experience in each aspect of business operations, including financial management, job coordination, and project management.

For my first small business of the week as chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am honored to recognize a local business that has not only flourished, but has been an inspiration

for entrepreneurs in Louisiana and across the country. Small businesses consistently provide unmatched attention, communication, and results to their customers, and I am proud to advocate for them. Once again, I congratulate Factory Service Agency on an exceptional 40 years and wish them continued success in the future.●

##### REMEMBERING SERGEANT STEPHEN R. PAQUIN

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I have the solemn duty of memorializing SGT Stephen R. Paquin, a soldier and native of Nashua, NH, who passed away on December 16 at the age of 27. After serving two tours in Afghanistan and a tour in Europe, Sergeant Paquin had recently transitioned from active duty into the U.S. Army Reserves and was training to become a drill sergeant with 1st Battalion, 304th Regiment in Londonderry. Born and raised in Nashua by his parents Kenneth and Paula alongside his brother Shawn, he was a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and Nashua High School South, where in his senior year Stephen was a member of the Purple Panthers 2005 State championship baseball team.

Stephen will forever be a member of the special community of Americans who selflessly defend our country so that the rest of us may continue to live in peace and freedom. He bravely joined the military at a time when it was almost guaranteed that new recruits would be called on to serve in a dangerous warzone far from home. It is my hope that during this extremely difficult time, Stephen's family and friends will find comfort in knowing that Americans everywhere deeply appreciate his commitment to our Nation.

Stephen is survived by his parents, Kenneth and Paula, his brother Shawn D. Paquin, and Christine Smith of Waltham, MA, his grandmothers Gloria Paquin of Nashua and Carol Mulligan of Dracut, MA, many aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends. This patriot will be missed by all.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire, I ask my colleagues and all Americans to join me in honoring the life and service of this brave American, SGT Stephen Paquin.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:55 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 30. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 30-hour threshold for classification as a full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and replace it with 40 hours.